



TOMPKINS COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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RESOLUTION NO. 9-2001 - RESOLUTION URGING NO REAUTHORIZATION OF THE PRICE ANDERSON ACT

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council is an advisory board to the County Board of Representatives on environmental issues, and

WHEREAS, there are distinct and well-known risks to the environment associated with the generation of electricity by nuclear power, and

WHEREAS, for more than 40 years the nuclear-power industry has enjoyed Federal protection from the full financial consequences of a serious nuclear power accident, and

WHEREAS, this industry liability protection was devised by Congress and the nuclear power industry after the insurance industry-- the professional risk assessor-- recognized early on that nuclear power was too dangerous to fully insure and refused to do so, and

WHEREAS, this industry liability protection was first embodied in the Price Anderson Act of 1957, which established a liability cap well below the compensation needed to cover most serious nuclear accident consequences, and

WHEREAS, this liability limit removing the nuclear power industry from the real market is a benefit no other industry has ever received, and

WHEREAS, the Price-Anderson Act was originally intended to be in effect for 10 years, to help what was then a fledgling technology, but has been renewed several times, most recently in 1988, and which is set to expire in August 2002, and

WHEREAS, President Bush's National Energy Policy calls on Congress to reauthorize the Act before it expires, and there is currently a strong push to get Congress to re-enact Price Anderson soon, citing our dependence on foreign oil as a reason for urging the construction of a new generation of nuclear reactors, and

WHEREAS, a nuclear power plant is a potential terrorist target, and

WHEREAS, currently under Price Anderson, nuclear utilities as a group, through a fairly complicated formula, can purchase a small level of insurance for accidents (currently \$200 million); for damages above that, each reactor would be assessed \$10 million a year for about 7.5 years. The total amount available to compensate accident damages thus depends on how many reactors are operating. The proposed Price Anderson reauthorization bill in the House of Representatives would increase the assessment to \$15 million per year per reactor -- for a total pot of about \$12 billion -- compared to the estimated cost to Ukraine, Belarus, and southern Russia of an estimated \$360 billion for the Chernobyl accident, and



WHEREAS, the nuclear industry should be held accountable for the real cost of doing business, competing on a more level playing field with renewable energy sources, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council urges no reauthorization of the Price Anderson Act, and

RESOLVED, further, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to our Congressional representatives, the appropriate U.S. Senate Committee Chair(s), and the Tompkins County Board of Representatives for their consideration.

Date: December 12, 2001

Voting In Favor: 10

Voting Against: 3

Abstentions: 0

The EMC is a citizen board that advises the County Board of Representatives on matters relating to the environment and does not necessarily express the views of the Tompkins County Board of Representatives.

